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STORY OF LADY JEAN GORDON.

In lately telling the 'Story of the Setons,' it was mentioned that a younger son of this ancient family adopted by marriage the surname of Gordon, and became progenitor of the dukes with that title. The person in question was Alexander Seton, who flourished at the beginning of the fifteenth century, and speedily rose to eminence. The Gordons originally belonged to the south of Scotland. The marriage of Alexander Seton with the heiress of the family led to a migration northwards. Under the surname of Seton-Gordon, Alexander got a grant of Strathbogie and other lands on the border of the Highlands, and his eldest son, also called Alexander, was created Earl of Huntly, with limitation to his heirs-male by his third wife. History speaks of the earl as an ambitious and rather troublesome person, often at feud, and, as a laird, not very scrupulous in 'brizzing yont,' which in plain English signifies pressing beyond the boundaries of your property, and forcibly taking possession of the lands of your neighbours—an inexpensive process of enlarging estates, not at all uncommon in old times. The Highland border was eminently adapted for carrying out such a cheap process of acquisition; for there were various broken clans—tribes who, having lost their chief, had nobody to guide or protect them, and so were easily dealt with, and could, in short, be robbed with impunity. It may even have happened, that the poor people who were treated in this unceremonious fashion were glad to be taken possession of by some masterful neighbour, in order to be protected from violence, and reinstated as members of a well-recognised clan.

With these facilities, the first Earl of Huntly 'brizzed yont' to some purpose. Enlarging his domains, he became so potent as to be appointed lieutenant-general of the kingdom; while in testimony of his power, which few dared to challenge, he was familiarly spoken of as the 'Cock of the North.' As another step in family aggrandisement, George, second Earl of Huntly, was married, in 1460, to Joanna, third daughter of that

accomplished monarch, James I., king of Scots. There was a further expansion in the family fortune by the marriage of the second son of George with Elizabeth, the sister and sole inheritor of the ninth Earl of Sutherland, whereby the surname of Gordon was introduced into that noble family (about 1512). In his stronghold, the castle of Strathbogie, the Earl of Huntly's style of living was on a scale even beyond that of royalty. Passing on to the reign of Queen Mary, George, fourth Earl of Huntly, was so powerful and unscrupulous as to be a terror to the state. Enriched at the Reformation by the plunder of the cathedral church of Aberdeen, and affecting to be ill-used in relation to some of his acquisitions, he had the audacity to put himself at the head of a force, with a view to seize the queen and her half-brother, the Earl of Murray, when on a royal progress in the north in 1562. In this instance, he went a step too far. A battle took place at Corrichie, some fifteen or sixteen miles from Aberdeen, and it was fatal to Huntly. He was killed, and his titles and estates were forfeited; while Sir John Gordon, his fourth son, was convicted of treason, and beheaded. It gives one a curious idea of the times to know that, at the instance of Murray, the queen attended the public execution of the unhappy youth, notwithstanding that he had been a favourite at court, and humoured with the notion that he might aspire to be Mary's husband.

Here was seemingly an end to the Huntly family, so far as social position was concerned. George, the representative of the ruined House, was a wandering fugitive. By a strange turn in the wheel of fortune, he was restored to the honours of his family, and partially to the possession of the forfeited estates. The reasons for this change in affairs had something to do with the insecure position into which Mary was brought in relation to her more powerful subjects. She had married Darnley in July 1565, and was at feud with Murray and other discontented noblemen. Friends required to be raised up, and in desperation, Huntly was brought into requisition.

Lady Jean Gordon, who was destined to take an important part in the history of the period, now comes upon the scene. She was daughter of George, the fourth earl, and sister of the restored Huntly. Being only twenty-one years of age, she could be turned to advantage by marrying the Earl of Bothwell, in whom, from his dash and fearlessness, the queen had vivid expectations of support. Lady Jean had no particular objection to the alliance; but there was a far-off family connection, and, according to the customary usage, it would be necessary to procure a dispensation from the pope to allow the marriage to be validly performed. Why any such dispensation should have been thought of, is by no means intelligible. By the overturn at the Reformation settlement, the canon law and the old ecclesiastical system had been abolished. The business of the church courts had been transferred to lay commissaries, by whose successors, until this day, the forms of process connected with wills and probates are administered. Yet, from an inveteracy of feeling, and to save any chance of future challenge—for no one could tell how things might drift back to the old arrangements—it was customary, in cases of this kind, still to rely on the good offices of the dispossessed archbishops, and the assent of their superior the pope.

Right or wrong—absurd as it now seems to be—the dispensation was procured from the pope, through the agency of his legate, Archbishop John Hamilton of St Andrews, for the marriage of Lady Jean Gordon with Bothwell. The alliance accordingly took place; and we should never have heard more about it, but for the marriage of Mary with Darnley. History informs us of that disastrous connection. Within the short space of two years, Rizzio was assassinated, Mary's son, James, was born, Darnley was murdered, and Mary was carried off and married by his murderer, Bothwell—a rapid succession of momentous events. What, however, of Lady Jean Gordon? How did Bothwell contrive to shake himself clear of her, so as to marry another? This was effected by a trick, regarding which, after an interval of three hundred years, we have only now got at the truth. We may go back a little in the narrative.

Bothwell, according to all testimony, was an unprincipled spendthrift and scoundrel, and Mary's infatuated attachment to him seems to be one of the oddest things we read of out of the realms of romance. That she knew he had taken the chief part in ridding her of Darnley, is matter of historical dispute. Huntly, however, was largely concerned in the transaction. For the selfish reason of getting the entire family property restored, he became a participator in the murder. What throws a certain grotesque character over the horrible affair is, that the desolate building at the Kirk of Field in which Darnley was blown up, was pompously adorned with hangings, carpets, and other trappings, the plunder of the cathedral of Aberdeen, which had been carried off from the castle of Strathgogie after the fall of the Huntlies. All this splendid upholstery was blown into the air, at two o'clock in the morning of the 10th February 1567

—the people of Edinburgh being roused from their slumbers by the terrific crash.* Huntly was not unrewarded. He was put in possession of a large portion of the old domains of his family. In some sense, this was an act of gratitude for favours to come. It was expected that the earl would win over his sister, Lady Jean, to the scheme of a divorce from Bothwell.

The exact nature of Bothwell's propinquity to the Huntly family is nowhere satisfactorily explained. According to one authority, Lady Margaret Gordon, daughter of George, second Earl of Huntly, became by marriage Countess of Bothwell, and from her, in regular succession by three removes, was descended James Hepburn, fourth Earl of Bothwell. This, however, does not agree with the account given in the generally accurate *Peerage* of Sir Robert Douglas. All we can really understand is, that Bothwell was related to the Huntly family by several removes—a degree of consanguinity which would, in the present day, be no barrier to intermarriage. Bothwell was born about the year 1535, and succeeded his father in 1556. Though turbulent and profligate in his habits, and plain, if not repulsive, in features, he artfully managed to have honours heaped upon him, as if morally and physically he had been a paragon of excellence. He was created Lord High Admiral of Scotland, sole Warden of the Scottish Marches, Governor of the castles of Dunbar and Edinburgh, and received extensive grants of lands in East Lothian and elsewhere. His marriage with Lady Jean Gordon gave him another lift onwards, for her ancestor, George, second Earl of Huntly, as has been told, married a daughter of James I.; and thus by birth and alliance he claimed connection with the royal family. As regards the dispensation for his marriage with Lady Jean, it has been long a subject of grave dispute. Some historians have averred that there was no such dispensation; some have had doubts on the point; while others, though on obscure grounds, have maintained that the dispensation was validly executed. A mysterious question is now happily solved.

A short time ago, Dr John Stuart, Secretary of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, while engaged in examining documents in the charter-room at Dunrobin, for the Historical Manuscripts Commission, had the good-fortune to bring to light the original Dispensation for the marriage of James, Earl of Bothwell, with Lady Jean Gordon. In a volume just published under the title of *A Lost Chapter in the History of Mary Queen of Scots Recovered*, Dr Stuart presents a fac-simile of the dispensation. It is an instrument in Latin, issued by Archbishop John Hamilton of St Andrews, as legate of the Holy See, and is dated February 17, 1566. In

* Whether Darnley was killed by the explosion or previously murdered, is not quite clear. His body, bearing marks of violence, was found under a tree in the adjoining garden. The house in which he lodged was inside and close to the old city wall, near the north corner of the present South Bridge Street and Drummond Street. A full account of the shocking event—with collateral circumstances, including the bringing of bags of gunpowder on horseback from Holyrood, and the buying of 'six halfpenny candles from Geordie Burns's wife in the Cowgate,' to give light during the operations—will be found in Burton's *History of Scotland*, second edition, vol. iv.: a work to be commended for its copious details, accuracy, and erudition, recently published.

the same volume is given a copy of the contract of the marriage. Among the parties who by their signatures assent to the alliance, are the queen, who signs as 'Marie R. ;' and Dame Elizabeth Keith, Countess of Huntly. This honourable lady was so illiterate as not to be able to sign her name—a very common imperfection among ladies of rank in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. To her ladyship's signature are appended the words: 'With my hand led on the pen be the lordie bischope of galloway.' Another of the signatures is that of George Lord Seton, who was the friend and counsellor of Queen Mary, and who sacrificed everything in her cause. The great interest of the queen in the affair is attested by her gift of a wedding-dress to the bride, consisting of 'cloth of silver, lined with taffeta.' She also bequeathed to her a 'coiff, garnished with rubies, pearls, and garnets.'

The marriage of Bothwell with Lady Jean took place in the Canongate Church on the 24th February 1566. Now commences the second act in the drama. Bothwell, after the murder of Darnley, February 10, 1567, wished to have Mary for a wife; but, to effect this object, means must be found to dissolve his marriage with Lady Jean. This lady had been so grossly maltreated, that there was abundant cause for procuring a divorce; but another reason, likely to be more effectual, was resorted to. It was no less than that the marriage betwixt Lady Jean and Bothwell had been effected without a dispensation, and was invalid, according to the canon law; that, legally, there had been no marriage at all. How Lady Jean, with the instrument of dispensation in her possession, should have lent herself to this deception, is only explicable by two facts—her desire to be rid of Bothwell, and a wish to conciliate the queen, with a view to promote the interests of her brother, the Earl of Huntly. But still more extraordinary is the behaviour of Archbishop John Hamilton. He had granted the dispensation on the 17th February 1566. Bothwell's application to him for a declaration of nullity of the marriage, on the ground that there had been no dispensation, was initiated on the 17th April 1567; and on the 7th of May following, the archbishop pronounced his sentence, 'that the marriage was radically null, in respect that the parties were related to each other within the forbidden degrees of consanguinity, and consequently were debarred from lawful marriage without a previous dispensation having been obtained.' Historical literature, we imagine, can scarcely produce a more scandalous instance of conniving with fraud. For John Hamilton, titular Archbishop of St Andrews, there can be no excuse. He must henceforth be stigmatised as a wilful perverter of justice and time-server, a disgrace to his profession. But for political or selfish ends, there was duplicity throughout. Lady Jean's brother, the Earl of Huntly, was a consenting party to the annulling of the marriage, and thereafter he took a prominent part in a meeting of nobles to recommend Bothwell as a suitable husband for Mary.

While the matter of the divorce was in hand, the queen, April 21, 1567, went to Stirling to visit her infant son. On her return, she was intercepted by Bothwell, with a body of horse, on the way to Edinburgh, and carried by him to the castle of Dunbar, where she was detained upwards of a week. Instead of taking offence at this outrage,

Mary, on the score of his eminent services to the state, gave a step in the peerage to Bothwell, by creating him Duke of Orkney. Her ill-starred marriage with this worthless personage took place on May 15, 1567, little more than three months after the murder of Darnley. What ensues belongs to history. Shocked with Mary's conduct, the people rose in insurrection. With Bothwell, she first sought refuge in Borthwick Castle. That being an insecure stronghold, they retreated to the castle of Dunbar. Thence, Mary adjourned to Seton palace, while Bothwell tried to raise a defensive force. In the shelter of the grand old mansion of the Setons, she had a few days' repose and recreation, one of the amusements provided for her being 'shooting arrows at the butts.' Then came the termination of her regal career. At Carberry Hill, on June 17, she surrendered herself to a confederated force, and, with 'tears and kisses,' bade farewell to her evil genius, Bothwell. She never saw him more. Their relationship as husband and wife lasted only a month and two days—a troubled honeymoon, ending in despair and anguish. We need not follow her to her island prison, her flight to England, the cruel treatment she experienced from Queen Elizabeth, and the tragical conclusion of her life at Fotheringhay, February 8, 1587. We may pity and deplore Mary's sad fate, without extenuating her errors.

Let us now turn to Lady Jean Gordon. Retaining the title of Countess of Bothwell, and endowed with a jointure from the Bothwell estates, she lived for a time in a suburb to the south of Edinburgh—probably the Sciennes, then a resort for retired persons of quality. Afterwards she went to reside with her brother, the Earl of Huntly, at his castle of Strathbogie. There she met Alexander, eleventh Earl of Sutherland, who, like herself, was by descent a Seton; her intimacy with him ripened into affection; and the pair were married in 1573. At this time, Bothwell was still living; but he died not long afterwards. Stripped of honours and estates, consigned to infamy, he was suddenly plunged into the condition of a homeless and reckless desperado. A moral retribution had at length overtaken one of the worst men of whom we have any record in history. Having ruined the fortunes of the young and hapless Mary Stuart, he was, by a just Nemesis, ruined himself. He betook himself to the profession of a pirate, in which he was captured by Norwegians, and he died mad in confinement, about 1576. It is not stated that Lady Jean regretted his decease. To Dunrobin, where she resided with her second husband, the Earl of Sutherland, she carried the dispensation which has been so much the subject of controversy. Deposited among the family archives, there it lay unknown to any one until lately discovered by Dr Stuart, who, by its publication, has done a material service to history.

Alexander, Earl of Sutherland, died while still a young man, at Dunrobin, in 1594, leaving his countess, Lady Jean, with a family to engage her motherly attention. One of her sons was Sir Robert Gordon, the historian of the House of Sutherland. To enable herself, as she said, to conduct with advantage the extensive estates for the benefit of her children, she took for third husband Alexander Ogilvie of Boyne, who had been previously married to Mary Beaton, one of the queen's 'four Maries.' In the excuse offered by

Lady Jean for entering into this fresh matrimonial engagement she can hardly be considered to have done herself justice. She was what would now be called 'a strong-minded woman,' with good business qualities. Douglas speaks of her as 'a woman of great prudence.' During the last illness of the Earl of Sutherland, she managed all the affairs of the family; and such was her energy and enterprise, that she caused coal to be dug for, and established a manufactory of salt, at Erora. The opening of a coal-pit at the spot had been previously attempted, but relinquished.

Lady Jean's union with the Laird of Boyne lasted only a few years. At his decease, she remained permanently a widow. Till her death, she continued to take an active share in the management of the Sutherland estates. Dr Stuart embellishes his book with a portrait of this remarkable woman, which seems to have been executed when she was advanced in years, and resembles the sober countenance of an aged nun. Till the last, she preserved the dispensation which had allied her to Bothwell, and there, as recently discovered, it continues at Dunrobin among the carefully preserved muniments of the Sutherland family. Lady Jean lived till her eighty-fourth year. She quietly drew out existence till the reign of Charles I., and died in May 1629.

How much it is to be regretted that, with her wonderful power of observation, Lady Jean did not write a diary of her experiences from the reign of Mary till the rise of the troubles which issued in the Commonwealth! For all this, she was competent; but possibly she was too much engrossed in family affairs to think of writing down an account of passing events. In 1615, she had to mourn the loss of her eldest son, John, twelfth Earl of Sutherland. At his decease, he left a son, from whom, in direct descent, sprang William, the seventeenth earl, who was destined to be the last of the family in the male (or Seton) line. His lordship had two children, daughters, Catherine and Elizabeth. An unlucky event deprived him of the elder when she was about a year and a half old. One day, after dinner, on coming into the drawing-room at Dunrobin, he, by way of frolic, held up the infant above his head, and, sad to say, let her accidentally fall, by which she received injuries from which she shortly died. In distress of mind at being the cause of his child's death, his lordship became ill, languished, and died at Bath in June 1766. From fatigue in having attended him on his deathbed, day and night, for three weeks, the countess, his widow, also died. Both were laid in one grave in the abbey church of Holyrood—a sacrifice to affection, and an acute sense of duty, pathetically commemorated in lines by Sir Gilbert Elliot of Minto:

for ne'er did wedded love
To one sad grave consign a lovelier pair,
Of manners gentler, or of purer heart!

There now only survived the orphan child, Elizabeth, who was born at Leven Lodge, near Edinburgh, in May 1765, and was little more than six months old when the heritage of the Sutherland family devolved upon her, which, unhappily, became matter of contest. Her right to succeed was litigated by two male relatives; but after various proceedings, lasting over five years, Elizabeth's title was sustained, as springing in a clearly traced line from the first Earl of Sutherland, 1275,

and that, on a previous occasion, a female had unchallenged inherited the titles and estates. Particularly, the decision was deemed a triumph, and extraordinary rejoicings took place in consequence.

The prudence, foresight, and vigour of character of Lady Jean Gordon were inherited by the young Countess Elizabeth. In 1779, she patriotically raised a regiment of a thousand men; and in 1793, raised another regiment of fencibles, which is now known as the 93d Sutherland Highlanders. At the court of George III. (nearly a hundred years ago), the Countess Elizabeth, for her beauty and fine figure, was justly considered to be a distinguished ornament. With her many estimable qualities, titles, and princely domain, her marriage could not but be brilliant. In 1785, the countess was married to George Granville Leveson Gower, Marquis of Stafford; he was also heir of his uncle, Francis, the famed Duke of Bridgewater. The marquis was created Duke of Sutherland in 1833; after which date, the Countess Elizabeth was generally styled the Duchess-Countess. She died in 1839.

To some, it may seem strange that we should extend the story of Lady Jean beyond the period of her varied existence. But in the institutions of Great Britain, a family with extensive possessions, and of historical note stretching over centuries, is a species of corporation identifying the past with the present, and calculated to be of use in imparting a certain solidity and permanence to the fabric of society. Is it not interesting to know, that the present Duke of Sutherland, noted for his public spirit and extraordinary desire to effect improvements on his property, traces his descent from Lady Jean Gordon, whose extraordinary history, in connection with Queen Mary, Darnley, Rizzio, Huntly, and Bothwell, we have very faintly delineated?

w. c.

THE AMERICAN ICE-HARVEST.

DURING a late visit to the United States, I had an opportunity of witnessing the spectacle of an industry almost peculiar to that country, namely, the *cutting and storing of ice*. It is not every traveller who has the chance of seeing it, and, indeed, but few Americans are themselves acquainted with the process.

Some American families who reside in the country, and have a pond of pure water on their premises, cut and store their own ice. But, as a general rule, the article is supplied by men who make a business of it—either as companies, or by individual enterprise. Of these, there are several in the northern states who not only provide ice for home consumption, but also in large quantities for exportation.

When the first great frost sets in, and is likely to last long enough to produce ice of a sufficient thickness, the ice-cutter's care commences. Not in now cutting the ice, for it takes some time before it is ready for this operation—even in America, where the thermometer often falls to twenty degrees below zero. If the prospect for a crop be good—that is, if the frost promises to be a severe one—the ice-cutter will wait till the ice be about fifteen inches thick; or more, if he feel confident that the freezing will continue. In some seasons, a thickness of two feet is attained. But there is something to do besides waiting: the surface has

to be kept clear of snow; and this is done by means of *scrapers*, as soon as the ice is strong enough to bear men upon it for the handling of them. These *hand-scrapers* are immense hoe-shaped implements, with wooden blades of about six feet in width along the edge; their use being to remove the loose snow, which retards congelation.

When the ice becomes strong enough to carry horses, which it soon does with the thermometer below zero, the *horse-scraper* is brought into requisition. It resembles a large shallow wooden box without the lid, only that at one end it is not square, but cut off diagonally—very much like the cases in which grand pianos are packed. The diagonal edge is shod with iron, so as to penetrate the frozen snow, and scrape it clear off, which it does very effectually. Not the *snow-ice*, however, as this has to be got rid of in a different manner, and with altogether a different implement—the *snow-plane*.

As the horse-scraper is carried on over the ice, the slanting edge throws the snow to one side, just as a ploughshare turns over the furrow of earth. The horse is harnessed as if for drawing a harrow, a trace being attached to the scraper by a hook fixed in the head or fore-end of the slant; and if the machine be not thought heavy enough to reach the bottom of the snow, the driver leaps inside the box, and so increases its weight.

When the time at length arrives for the ice-cutting to begin—in short, the reaping of the *ice-harvest*—the process is exceedingly interesting, and a variety of tools is displayed upon the pond. First, an area of clear ice is selected, perhaps an acre in extent, or it may be several acres, according to the amount of business transacted by the individual or company who has charge of the enterprise. A stake or *target* is set up at one edge of the cleared space, either by being inserted into the ice, or simply stuck in one of the heaps of snow that have been scraped off. The target is to guide the eye in striking a line. The true line being fixed on, a straight-edge is held firmly in its place, and the *hand-groove* is brought into requisition. This consists of a series of sharp steel chisels—each a quarter of an inch in breadth of blade—set firmly in an iron back-piece, one behind the other. The blades are usually seven in number, and of unequal lengths; the front one being the shortest, the second coming behind it a very little longer, the one behind that a little longer still, and so on, to the last. They are placed parallel to one another, and slantingly to the surface, as the coulter in a plough, or the steel-piece in a carpenter's plane. It is, in fact, a species of groove-plane, such as carpenters make use of for moulding; only that the groove is cut in the ice by seven steel pieces, instead of the one used for grooving wood.

When the hand-groove is once entered in the ice, the front tooth or chisel cuts out a slight square trench of a quarter of an inch in breadth, and about the same in depth; the second chisel following, deepens the trench another quarter of an inch; the third, another; and so on. Thus, when the hand-groove has been drawn along the ice, being firmly pressed down, it leaves a score of an inch and a half in depth, cut out as neatly as if done with a moulding-plane. What might be called the 'shavings,' or ice-chips, are thrown out

by the chisels—each, as it passes on, casting out its own. The track thus made must be in a true right line; and it is for this that the straight-edge is laid along the ice, just as a ruler is applied upon paper.

As soon as a commencement is made by one length being thus cut, the straight-edge is taken up and shifted along, still keeping in the same line, through the guidance of the stake or target; and thus the trench is continued, bit by bit, till it has reached one corner of the great square, or rectangle, of ice intended to be taken out. The straight-edge is now turned at right angles to the course just completed, and a new groove is commenced, leading off so as to section off the ice into squares. When thus sectioned, the ice, by the aid of a plough, is 'marked' out by trenches, until the whole space of an acre, or acres, presents the appearance of a gigantic chess-board, the squares being each twenty-two inches wide.

And now another implement appears upon the scene—the *four-inch cutter*. This is simply another plough, drawn by a horse; and when it has gone over the ice, the trenches will be found four inches deep behind it. And then comes a *six-inch* cutter of exactly similar construction, making them six; and an *eight-inch* cutter hollowing them out to eight; and then a *ten-inch* one, still further deepening them to ten. There is even a twelve-inch ice-plough upon the premises, should it be required to make a furrow of this depth; which it rarely is; and only when the ice is over twenty inches in thickness. The reason for having the 'cutters' thus graduated is, that the strength of a horse is not equal to cutting a groove of sufficient depth all at once. Two inches at a time is a fair plough for an ordinary plough-horse.

It is not necessary that the ice be cut clean through to the water. Five or six inches may remain, to be split off by the *ice-bars* and chisels, soon after to be brought into play. Ice separates easily in a vertical direction, though it is not so easy to break it horizontally.

In America, ice-houses, built above-ground, without any cellarage, stand upon the shore of the lake or pond from which the ice is procured, as near to the edge of the water as a proper foundation can be obtained for them. As some of the ice-cutting concerns have a very large trade, both for home consumption and exportation, they require storage-houses of large capacity. The ice-houses are not all upon the same pattern. They are usually, however, large, square, or oblong structures, of three or four stories in height, several of them standing side by side in a row, their gables flush with one another, and facing the same way. When we speak of them having three or four stories, it is not intended to be understood that they have this number of floors. On the contrary, they are open from ground to roof. It is but by rows of windows that the separate stories are represented—the windows being only in the gable ends. In point of fact, they are not windows intended to admit the light, but doors, designed to give entrance to the ice. Along each row of them, and slightly elevated above their sills, runs a plank-staging, wide enough to allow of men passing conveniently back and forward. It is continued along all the houses (if there be more than one); and this is why they are set so closely together. The purpose of this staging will now be discovered.

The walls are of wood—'weather-boarding'—painted white. They are double—that is, there are two sheetings of plank, standing at least twenty-four inches apart, the interspace being filled up with *tan-bark*. This substance is used because it has been found to be the best non-conductor.

By the side of the huge pile stands a building of a different character, having a tall chimney towering over it. Within, will be found a steam-engine, of perhaps forty horse-power, with its boiler and other apparatus complete; while outside, will be seen two wheels, one of them fixed down by the edge of the water, so that its circumference just clears it; while the other is set in a framework at the end of the first or lowest staging, already described. Around both, and connecting them together, is a great movable belt of iron, nearly two feet in breadth, and pointed or hinged in sections of about two feet each, so that it may play around the wheels when they are in motion. It is the well-known mechanical contrivance of the *endless chain*. On this, at intervals corresponding with the jointed sections, cross-bars are placed, projecting out from its face, and giving it a certain resemblance to the common step-ladder, the cross-pieces representing the rounds.

And now, to set this machinery in motion, and see how it acts. First, a canal has to be cut through the ice, commencing at the lower wheel, and leading to the area of ice already marked and prepared for removal. This canal has to be of such width that a section of ice of twelve squares' breadth will pass conveniently through it. The next thing done is to separate a large rectangular piece of the ice, and float it along the canal towards the storehouse. This rectangle is usually thirty squares in length by twelve in breadth—in all, three hundred and sixty sections, as big as the floor of a ball-room. A man leaps upon it, having in his hands a long pole, with spike and hook at the end—a tool very much like a boat-hook. With this he directs its navigation along the canal, now springing to the adjacent firm ice, anon returning to his raft, which we will follow along its water-way to the edge of the pond, where the lower wheel has commenced its revolutions, the upper one, of course, also revolving, and the endless chain continually travelling between them.

There we behold new displays of ingenuity connected with the ice-harvest. Men standing upon a wooden platform by the *slip*, or dock in which the lower wheel revolves, with huge ice-chisels, or *splitting-bars*, break up the rafts as they are brought in, separating them into sections; while other men with tools resembling boat-hooks, guide the great crystal cubes, so that they get caught upon the projecting cross-bars of the endless chain, and by it are lifted out of the water, and carried up to the staging of the storehouse. One after another, in endless succession, these pellucid parallelopipedons are seen gliding upward, just like the buckets of a mud-dredging machine, or those used for drawing water on the banks of the Nile.

At the end of the staging already described, a man, armed with a grappelling-iron, seizes hold of the block of ice as it comes opposite him, and, with a dexterous jerk, detaches it from the endless chain, and transfers it to a smooth timber track, gently descending. Along this it glides towards the open windows, at one of which it is again

grappled, turned from its course, and shoved inside the house, along a similar smooth way, till it reach its place of deposit among thousands of its fellows. Like boxes of goods, or cotton bales in a warehouse, the ice cubes are piled one upon another, of course in regular order, to economise the precious space.

When the ice-house has been filled up to the level of the first row of windows, the steam-engine must stop, and the wheels for a time cease to revolve. The endless chain has to be rearranged. This is done by fixing the upper wheel on the next staging above, where the proper appliances have been already erected. Then the work goes on as before; the only difference being, that the ice-blocks are now elevated one story higher. The ice-house being filled up to the second tier of windows, there is another stoppage, and a fresh adjustment of wheel and chain; and so on, till the huge cavernous inclosures are filled up almost to the rafters. Then the remaining space is padded with hay, and the housing being completed, the windows are 'shut up for the season.'

At the opposite end of the ice-house, there is usually a tramway, with cars, to convey the ice to some railway station or shipping port; and these are loaded by means of stagings and slides, very similar to those used in the storage. Grappelling-irons are always required in handling the blocks of ice, as to attempt moving them with the naked hand would be not only uncomfortable, but dangerous, bringing frost-bite and blisters as a sure consequence. It is in the coldest weather that the work is performed; for it is a strange, and yet unexplained circumstance, that ice cut and stored in mild or open weather is more liable to melt than that harvested when the thermometer is very low. Hence, the ice-cutters, disregarding comfort, choose frosty weather for their work. Despite its discomforts, it is a pleasant and cheerful calling. Those who follow it, get well paid; and as it lasts only for a short time, its hardships are easily endured. The picturesqueness of its surroundings make it attractive; and despite the pinching cold, there is perhaps as much cheer in the American cutting and housing of ice, as in an English 'harvest-home,' or the 'wine-gatherings' of continental countries.

WALTER'S WORD.

CHAPTER V.—MRS SHEDDON'S REVENGE.

ON Walter's return to the *Wheat-sheaf*, he found the captain just descended from his room, and looking very handsome, but haggard. He had not slept well, he said, for his 'confounded arm' had troubled him. At this spectacle, his companion's heart was instantly moved to pity, and smote him sore for its late severe judgment upon that hero. He had taken this man to task for selfishness, yet here he was maimed, or, at all events, disabled, in the performance of his duty: it could not have been a pleasant thing, however glorious, to have crossed and recrossed that Crimean valley, with the cannon-balls hurtling over it, and the grave gaping before every stride of his horse.

'My dear fellow, can I not do something to ease the pain? A cold-water bandage, a'—

'No, no; you might as well blow upon it,' answered the captain impatiently. 'But I tell

you *what*, if you'll sit down, while the breakfast is getting ready, and write an application for the Special License—that will be really doing me a service. I'll sign it, of course, but writing is as hard a job for me just now as when I first learned pot-hooks and hangers.'

This was another stick to be fetched for the schoolmaster; but Walter obeyed with a smothered sigh; and the missive was despatched at once by messenger, in order to catch the mid-day mail from Falmouth.

In spite of his wounds and his love, the captain made a much better breakfast than Litton, though he had been out for hours in the sea-breeze.

'Gad,' said the former, without notice of this circumstance, 'this Penaddon air is first-rate for the appetite; and now that that license is sent for, and one has nothing on one's mind, one feels inclined to eat for ever.'

Litton thought within himself, that that poor girl up at the Hall, for the first time separated from home and friends, and having for her sole companion a lady so well acquainted with the law of the land as respected clandestine marriages, might not be so fortunate in having 'nothing on her mind;' but he kept that conviction to himself.

It was near eleven o'clock before the meal was concluded; and the captain, putting an immense cigar in his mouth, expressed his conviction that they were 'due up yonder,' and led the way to his aunt's residence by the footpath through the corn.

'Queer old church that,' said he, with a nod in the direction of the ruin; 'and a very favourite place for the "cheap-trippers" to bring their grub to. So was the castle here—it's no more a castle, by-the-bye, than it's a lunatic asylum, but that's what they call it—until Farmer Yates stopped their little larks by putting up "Spring-guns and man-traps set on these premises." Did you ever see a spring-gun or a man-trap? It would probably cost a man a thousand pounds in damages, or twenty years' transportation, who should set up any such engine; and yet people believe in their existence.'

'That is the case, perhaps, with some other dreadful penalties, that seem a little disproportioned to the offence,' observed Litton thoughtfully.

'How so? You don't mean that one can't punish those poacher fellows?' answered the matter-of-fact captain.

'No, no,' said the other, smiling; 'I was referring to certain theological menaces, the effect of which may be very wholesome, like that of the board yonder, but which one ventures to hope may a little exceed the reality.'

'Oh, I believe all *them*,' cried the captain resolutely. 'None of your free-thinking for me. I'm not strait-laced in morals and that; but when it comes to religion, that is quite a different thing. I'm a church-and-king man, I am.'

'What is that?' inquired his companion dryly.

'Well, a man that swears by the Thirty-nine Articles, and respects the laws, sir—the game-laws, for instance. It is true I have neither read the one nor the other, but I take 'em on trust. That's faith, my good sir; in which I am afraid you artist gentlemen are rather deficient.'

'My dear Selwyn, it is my opinion that Nature intended you for the pulpit—to beat "the drum ecclesiastic," instead of the kettle-drum.'

'As it happens, we don't beat kettle-drums, nor even possess them,' said the captain, with a little touch of temper, the usual accompaniment of theological discussion. 'It is a pity to see a clever fellow like you talking of matters you don't understand. Here's something which you do. Look at that fine view, yonder, through the trees: the church and the sea, and the ships, and that little beggar with the red cap, with his shrimp-net? I hope my aunt has given Lotty some shrimps for breakfast.—By jingo, there they are!'

The two ladies were walking in the wall-garden of the Hall, which, standing on a lower level than the spot where the young men stood, was completely commanded by it. Though the grounds about the house were, as we have hinted, as ill kept as the mansion was dilapidated, this did not affect their natural beauty, which was very great. The walls of the garden were crumbling to the touch of time, but moss and lichen covered them; the fruit-trees had escaped from the rusty nails that had once confined them, but their laden branches looked not less fair as they hung heavily down, and even trailed upon the ground; and though it might be difficult to tell flower from weed, so rankly did they grow together, the garden-plots blazed with colour.

This wildered Eden was bordered by a swift and brawling stream, and beside it paced Lotty and her hostess, apparently in earnest talk, and quite unconscious of the admiring eyes that were fixed upon them. The outlook to seaward had been well worthy of the captain's encomiums, but Walter thought this home-picture even still more charming, and one fair figure in the foreground worth them both.

'How very, very beautiful!' cried he in a rapture.

'It's a pretty spot, ain't it?' assented the captain, 'though one can't say much for the garden. The fact is, my aunt is as poor as Job, though she has not his patience (if her husband's testimony is to be relied on), and the whole place is tumbling to pieces. She ought to have taken a cottage—but I suppose she knows her own business best. She is clever enough and to spare. I'll lay my life—I can tell it by the bend of her neck—that she is pumping poor Lotty at this moment; "eliciting," as the police reports have it, every scrap of information concerning the Great Self-made—that's what I call old Brown—and his belongings. I'm obliged to have all *my* wits about me, I can tell you, when she takes to cross-examining *me*. Not that I've anything particular to be ashamed of, more than my neighbours; but if one has a little secret, one likes to keep it, and that woman is resolute to find it out. Scandal is the breath of life to her, so you may imagine what a difficulty of breathing she labours under at Penaddon.'

'But why does she live there, then?' was Walter's not unnatural inquiry.

'Well, you see, she has had a quarrel with Society, and it is better to live at a place where there is nobody to visit one, than where there are plenty of fine folks about who won't. I shall have to talk to her a bit this morning about family matters—"urgent private affairs," as we say in the Crimea—and must leave you and Lotty to get on together as you can. Young women that are "be-spoken" are not, I know, very lively companions; but she looks upon you, I'm sure, already as an

old friend. It is true "the friend of the husband," added the captain, laughing, 'is rather a dangerous acquaintance; but if I can't trust "our chaperon," there is no faith to be placed in man.'

Litton laughed, as he was expected to do, but the colour came into his cheek in spite of himself: it was not the blush of shame, for his nature was loyal to the core, and yet he was conscious that he was not so completely qualified for the post assigned to him as the captain imagined. No chaperon's heart goes pit-a-pat as her charge draws nigh, no chaperon's speech begins to fail her as she discourses (on the proprieties, for instance) to the object of her solicitude; yet both these sensations were experienced by Walter Litton within the next five minutes, at the expiration of which he found himself walking with Lotty by the little river, followed slowly, and at a considerable interval, by Selwyn and his aunt. The latter lady had saluted Walter as though she had not met him since the previous evening, which astonished him not a little, since it took for granted, what, indeed, happened to be the fact, that he had not mentioned the interview to the captain. Had she read that reticence in his face? Or did she deem that their conversation in the churchyard had been of too confidential a kind for him to have alluded to it? Or was it really true, as his friend had laughingly suggested to him, that this 'grass widow,' as he called her, had fallen in love with him, and wished to establish clandestine relations between them? Litton was 'human' enough, and not much less of a coxcomb, perhaps, than the rest of our sex; but circumstances alter feelings as well as cases, and just now, walking by the side of Lotty, he did not like Mrs Sheldon the better for her prudence.

The rims of Lotty's eyes were a little red, but that did not detract from her charms, in the opinion of her present companion: for that she had been weeping, only proved the tenderness of her heart. She had been somewhat overtired with her journey, she said, in answer to his inquiries, but was well enough in health. As to her spirits, she could not help being anxious about those she had left at home. That was only natural, Walter allowed, yet expressed his confident expectation that, in a week or two, she would, as the captain's bride, be as cherished a member of her family as ever.

'Nay, Mr Litton, you do not know my father,' answered she tearfully: 'I am afraid I shall have offended him past forgiveness. Reginald does not like to look upon the dark side of things, I know, far less to talk of it; but papa will be very, very angry, I know; and Lily, oh, so sad!'

Here she hung her pretty head, and a sob was heard, which wrung Walter's heart.

'But it is better to talk about it,' said he softly, 'than to let a woe unuttered prey upon your mind. I cannot fancy that any one who knows you—far less who loves you, as your father must do—can very long hold out against your pleading. Selwyn is a gentleman, well born, well bred, a soldier who has distinguished himself in action, one any man might be proud to call his son-in-law. It is not as though you had married, I do not say beneath you—for you could never have stooped to that—but a mere nobody—like myself, for instance.'

Perhaps it was agreeable to him to put the case, even supposititiously, in this way, or perhaps he fondly expected that his companion would re-

monstrate against this lowly estimation of his own position (which in reality he by no means thought so ill of), but Lotty took no notice of this personal illustration whatever.

'No, no,' sighed she; 'it is not that; but my father has set his heart upon his daughters making what are called "good matches;" he wishes us to marry rich men. And now that I have chosen Reginald, it will be all the worse for poor dear Lily. Papa will choose for her himself some odious creature who has money, and she will be made miserable all through me.'

'Nay, it is surely wrong to harass yourself with the fear of so remote a contingency,' urged Walter; 'for having lost one daughter—or dreaming for the present that he has lost her—your father will be slow to part with the other; he will keep her at home to comfort him, and be won through her, in the end, to a reconciliation with you and yours. It must be so, I feel confident, and especially' (here Litton gave a little bow) 'if your sister Lilian is like yourself.'

The bow was quite thrown away, indeed it is doubtful whether Lotty observed it, but, to his question, she replied with simplicity: 'Oh, Lilian is worth a thousand of me. She is wise, and dutiful, and good!—oh, so good, Mr Litton! And I know she is breaking her heart for me, though I am so unworthy of her love;' and she put up her little hands before her face and sobbed anew.

'If all the rest you have told me,' said Walter earnestly, 'is not more true than *that*—I mean that you are unworthy of her love—I must be excused for not sharing your fears. Sooner or later, all must needs be well with you, since justice rules the world. The law allows you, being of full age, to make your own choice in marriage; and in forbidding you to do so, your father is himself disobedient to the law. You have immediate happiness in prospect; do not dim its brightness by apprehensions that time will shew are groundless.'

'I will try, indeed I will try, Mr Litton, to look on the bright side of things,' sighed poor Lotty, and, like a chidden child, she dried her eyes, and strove to smile.

'That's a brave girl,' said Walter approvingly; 'and here comes one to reward you for your courage, and who will know how to comfort you better than I.'

That was the last effort which Litton made to intrude his own personality, where, it must be acknowledged, it had no rightful place; at the same time, it was very innocently meant; he did love her, with all his heart, but with such a flame, that if his heart had been of glass, it would have been seen to burn with purity: there were no noxious exhalations of envy or hatred of his friend, nor did a thought of rivalry mingle with it. He was content to be a brother to Lotty, if she would have regarded him in that light; but even that, as it seemed, was not to be. She was so wrapped up in others, in her Reginald, and in her own belongings, that she had shewn herself scarcely conscious of his existence; and with that acknowledgment of his services of the previous day, as it seemed, he must be content for evermore. Her look, as she spoke it, was still mirrored in his mind; her words were stereotyped there, beautiful to read and read again, like some sacred text, all gilt and colour, which a mother hangs on the wall of her child's

chamber, to meet his eyes at morn and eve; but there were to be no more such looks or words. Why should there be? He had been overpaid already for what he had done; and besides, there would have been danger in such thanks. This he felt to be the case, not so much from any consciousness of latent longings for that forbidden fruit, as from his indifference to other dainties. Mrs Sheldon, with whom he was thrown *tête-à-tête*, as a matter of course, from that hour, until he left Penaddon, was more than gracious to him, but without kindling a spark of gratitude; the position was expressed by the formula of that great stumbling-block to the female intellect, the Rule of Three: As Mr Litton's delicate attentions were to Lotty, so were those of Mrs Sheldon to Mr Litton.

There were doubtless good points about the character of his hostess, but she was not so much above the average of her sex as to take this insensibility in good part: that a young man of two-and-twenty, no fool, indeed, but of a frank and simple nature, should have such opportunities of a little flirtation with her, and neglect them; that she should put forth all her strength to make him captive, and yet fail, was a circumstance that she exceedingly resented. She knew something of his own art, and went out sketching with him to the most picturesque and romance-inspiring spots, in vain; she sang to him to the music of the wave, yet shewed herself no siren; she told him her own touching history—so much of it, that is, as it suited her to tell him—without evoking a single spark of sympathy more than the barest civility demanded. It was long since she had made a conquest, and that made her all the more eager to bring this young gentleman to her feet: her weapons, she flattered herself, were as formidable as ever, and she had certainly not forgotten how to use them. Yet he was as invulnerable as Achilles. Why she wanted to wound him, she probably did not know herself, nor what she would have done with the poor wretch, had she succeeded. A man's intentions in such cases, even if not honourable, are generally definite; a male 'flirt,' though such a thing may exist, is a *lusus nature*. Mrs Sheldon was simply obeying an instinct of nature; and just as a sportsman who delights in shooting, though the contents of the game-bag are not to be his own, is annoyed at missing, so was she annoyed, and even ashamed, at her ill success.

It is not with the mistress of Penaddon Hall that this story has mainly to do, else it would not be uninteresting to note the rapidity with which the barometer of this lady's feelings, with respect to the young painter, rose and fell; within those few days, the arrow performed a complete circle. It pointed to 'set fair' as long as it could, and then something gave way (it was her patience), and it fell to 'very stormy.'

On the day when the stick which poor Walter had been set to fetch was used upon his own back—when the license arrived, that is, and he had 'given' Lotty 'away' to Reginald, and the happy pair had departed for the honeymoon, and the fly that was to take himself to the railway stood at the Hall door, Mrs Sheldon made him a farewell present: not a piece of plate, but a piece of her mind.

'I will not say I am glad you are going, Mr Litton,' said she, as she held out her hand, 'yet I

honestly confess it seems to me that you have been here long enough, for your own happiness and for that of another.'

Walter could scarcely believe his ears. He had conceived a dim notion for some time that this lady had been endeavouring to get up a flirtation with him, to which, perhaps, he had not responded very gallantly; but he had taken Reginald's statement, that she had fallen in love with him, mostly as a joke, for which, indeed, it was half-intended; this sudden suggestion, therefore, made apparently in all seriousness, that he had fallen a victim to her charms, staggered him not a little. To reply that he was sorry to have made her unhappy, was a flight of coxcombry beyond his powers, yet it really seemed as if that was expected of him.

'Believe me, my dear Mrs Sheldon,' stammered he, 'I shall never forget these days at Penaddon, and all that, thanks to you, I have enjoyed during my visit.'

'Endeavour rather to forget them,' answered she gravely, 'and especially what you have missed. I know your secret, and I will keep it, Mr Litton; but I cannot but express a sense of relief that Lotty has left my roof, and with her husband.'

With that Parthian shaft, she withdrew into her sitting-room, closing the door behind her, and leaving him standing in the hall, transfixed! He had received what is called 'a classical education,' and the *aperta injuria formæ* of the poet recurred to his memory with a blinding flash. If he had despised the charms of his hostess, she had certainly taken her revenge.

How wretched was that weary drive over the moor to Falmouth, which, unhappily too, he could not but contrast with what it must have been to the pair who had preceded him! How desolate was the sea, how barren the land, to his eyes, how bright and glorious to theirs! For them was love, and the fruition of it! for him too was love—he confessed it; how could he ignore it, when another had read it written on his heart, through all the armour of duty, friendship, honour, which he had put on in vain, and with which he had striven to hide it from himself! For him was love, alas, and loneliness. The spring of his life was broken, for hope was gone. If fame had been that day within his reach, he would not have cared to put forth his hand to grasp it. Oh, evil hour, in which he had consented to accompany his friend to the fair south, and tend him! Penaddon was hateful to him. He had many a record of it in his sketch-book: its silver sands, its quiet bay, its time-hallowed ruins by the shore; and he would burn them all. Yet what would that avail, since the recollection of them—every spot she had admired, every scene in which she had set foot—would be ever present to his eyes! As to continuing in the neighbourhood, concluding there what he had once looked forward to as his 'holiday,' that was not to be thought of. He would return to town and Work—would work his fingers off, and his brains away, would kill himself with work, if possible; for the grave itself seemed welcome to him!

Poor Walter! It is not at all times that Heaven is kind, for refusing to lift the curtain of our future; we often groan and writhe at the prospect of misfortunes which do not come, although they seem so near that the very shadow of their approach overwhelms us with its gloom; and even the wretchedness that is present, and makes us in

love with death, and seems beyond relief, is not seldom mitigated, nay, dissipated, by an unexpected ray coming from an unlooked-for place—as though dawn should break at midnight and from the West—and making our murky sky a cloudless blue.

CHAPTER VI.—IN BEECH STREET.

If there is any panacea for wretchedness in this useful world, it is work, and work only. If all the suicides, and the motives that led to them, could be tabulated, it is certain that the want of work—incapacity for it, or inability to obtain it—would be found, in nine cases out of ten, under the column 'Cause;' even the Hopeless—those who work without prospect of reward in any form—do not commonly leave the sunshine for 'the sunless land' while hand or brain can still find employment. The uttermost misery of human life is probably expressed by that vulgar phrase which we read every day applied to some starving wretch, in our newspapers, with careless eyes, or at most with a shrug of our shoulders—'out of work.' Walter Litton was so far wise that he knew this. Left to himself, while still a lad, in the Great Babylon, amid temptations against which no common virtue is of avail, he had not succumbed to them, mainly because he had set himself to work; while others of his age, though under taskmasters, had shirked it. His nature was wholesome, and he kept it so, by this simple means: in an atmosphere of vice and pollution, he carried about with him this purifier, this antidote, this disinfectant. He had faith, it is true, for his mind was reverent, and he had had a good mother; but faith without work would not have saved him. Among other marvellous virtues which employment confers upon him who has his heart in it, is a respect for others who likewise toil. The honest worker, no matter in what guild he is a craftsman, feels no contempt for those who labour in a humbler sphere. It is the idler, useless to others, and a burden to himself, who seeks to justify his own indolence by despising these. We have seen a state fall to pieces mainly from its own rottenness, wherein to work was held to be shameful and a badge of servitude; and the condition of the mere pleasure-seeker is like unto it. At the least stroke of misfortune, he collapses; though, while prosperity lasts, he sits above the thunder like a god, and smiles contemptuously upon the busy hands that supply his needs.

To those who are acquainted with artist-life, there is nothing more characteristic than the behaviour of a painter to his paid sitter; in this are found the extremes of rudeness and refinement, of selfishness and consideration, of coarseness and chivalry. When the model happens to be of the female sex, the case becomes all the more significant. It is the opinion of the outer world that 'the young persons' who sit for the Imogens that adorn the walls of our picture-galleries, or typify Innocence with her Dove, or Faith with her palm-branch, do not afford what is called 'improving' society for the young artist, nor the young artist for them. The whole Royal Academy, on the other hand, are zealous to affirm that the pursuit of art is far too elevating to permit its votaries to stoop to ignoble flirtation; nay, that not only good taste, but a certain reverence for their profession, compels decorum—*noblesse oblige*—towards these

handmaidens. To differ from a R. A. upon any question concerning his own calling, is (as is well known) an intolerable impertinence; and I will only venture to affirm that, in the days when one frequented studios, I remarked that honest young gentlemen of the brush used a brusqueness of manner towards their Imogen which suggested some distrust of their own virtue. It is easier, I fancy (though, singularly enough, it does not require so strong a flight of fancy), to conceive a lay-figure to be a young lady, than to conceive a young lady to be a lay-figure; and in order to accomplish this latter feat, we must not be too polite.

Mr Jack Pelter, for example, who, as we have mentioned, was wont to go halves in his models of both sexes with his fellow-lodger, Mr Litton, was exceedingly gruff and tyrannous with the 'Imogens'—a system which he had at first adopted from prudential motives; it had kept him heart-whole while that organ had been young and impressionable; and now that it was tough and leathery, and his soul defied enchantment, he was gruff from habit.

'You're a precious deal too civil, young fellow,' he would growl to Litton, who, to a woman, and a poor one, could not be otherwise than the very pink of politeness; 'and some day or another, you'll repent it.'

But no entanglement of the kind his mentor had suggested had happened to Litton, and it was less likely to happen now than ever. He worked even more diligently than before, since his return from Penaddon; but the recollection of her he had met and lost there could not be thereby effaced; his heart was so occupied with Lotty, that is, with fears and hopes upon her account—'Would her father forgive her? and if not, would her husband still be kind?'—that the sacred place in it, in which a man keeps the idols he worships without stain, had no room for the image of another woman.

Otherwise, parents and guardians, all one's female relatives, and men of the world generally (who know everything, and yet believe in nothing), would have thought it a dangerous thing for him to be painting Nellie Neale for two hours *per diem* in an attitude of supplication. What made it more dangerous for him, they would have thought (and also for her, if such young persons were worth thinking of at all), was, that Miss Ellen Neale was not a professional model. She was the daughter of 'a cobbler who lived'—or at least laboured—'in a stall' at the corner of a neighbouring street, and had never before 'sat' to an artist. Litton, who was far from being a dandy, had business relations with her father; and while bidding him send for a pair of boots that wanted mending, had seen this pretty little creature bring him his mid-day meal from home, wrapped neatly up in a basket; from which circumstance he had christened her on the spot Red Riding-hood, and she had learned in time to call him grandmother. The honest young fellow perhaps adopted this latter title to give him a reverence in her eyes, which his years and looks might well have failed to extort from her; and if that blood-relationship had actually existed between them, his behaviour towards her could not have been more exemplary. Mr Jack Pelter had not been in town when this young lady's professional

services had been secured, nor was he now in need of an 'Imogen,' pecuniary necessities, consequent upon certain extravagances of the vacation, having caused him to confine himself to the less sublimated but more remunerative occupation of portrait-painting; so Walter had his present model to himself. He also had been taking portraits, since his return from Penaddon; and though not disposed of at a very high figure, these had furnished him with funds for more than his needs, as well as provided him with this excellent counterfeited presentment of Philippa, Edward's queen, in the act of beseeching that monarch to spare the lives of the citizens of Calais.

'A very uncommon subject, truly,' said Jack Pelter, in his usual character of cynical, but friendly critic. 'But why not strike out something perfectly original, my dear fellow—such as the Finding of Harold's Body after Hastings?'

'Because I mean to shew,' returned the other with equal gravity, 'how a great artist can appropriate a story, however often pictured, and make it his own on canvas, just as Shakspeare has done in literature.'

So every afternoon, from two until the wintry dusk closed in, Philippa of Hainault knelt upon a soft cushion of Utrecht velvet (or something like it), on the second floor of No. 99 Beech Street, and held up prayerful hands to the stern Edward, who thus replied to her supplications: 'The head a shade more to the right—the hands a little lower—just the faintest smile, as if you saw the ruffian was yielding. Thank you; that's beautiful' (which it was). 'If you are getting to feel stiff or tired, Red Riding-hood, be sure to mention it.'

'I do just a little, grandmamma.'

'Then get up, and trot about.'

This happened many times during each sitting, if Queen Philippa's position could be called so; and on one occasion, just after one of these trottings about, and when Nellie had fallen on her knees again, and was about to suplicate for the poor citizens with renewed vigour, there was a knock at the door, and in walked Captain Reginald Selwyn. The house in Beech Street did not boast of any room of the chambers; when the front-door bell was rung, a diminutive maid-of-all-work answered it, and directed the ringer to the first or second floor, according as Mr John Pelter or his friend was the object of his visit; neither of them had many callers, but Litton had far fewer than Pelter; the time had not yet come, if it was ever to do so, when critics should drop in, who would have a word to say, under the head of Art Gossip, about the forthcoming picture by Mr W. Litton; and still less for patrons or picture-dealers to shew their critical faces, with a view of bespeaking some immortal work before it left the easel. So Walter expected no company on that day, but least of all a visit from Reginald Selwyn. Many months had elapsed since the marriage of which he had himself been the aider and abettor, but not a line had the captain written to him from the day they had parted at Penaddon Hall; nor could his wounded arm have been an excuse for so long a silence, for there he stood in the door-way, with all his limbs like other people's, except that they looked more shapely and strong than most, which indeed they were. His face had lost its pallor, but also, or so it seemed to Walter's attentive eyes, much of its gaiety and brightness.

'Why, Litton, my good fellow, you must have thought me dead, as well as "done for." Matri'—Here his glance lit upon Philippa, Edward's queen, who had risen hastily from her cushion, and was regarding the new-comer with much embarrassment. It was the first time that her sittings had been intruded upon by any one, save Mr Pelter, whom she did not 'mind,' and looked upon as another 'grandmamma.'

'I think we will finish for to-day, Miss Neale,' said Walter quickly, 'as our time is nearly up, and this is an old friend whom I have not seen for long.'

'I hope the young lady will not go on my account,' said the captain gallantly.

But Nellie had already exchanged her high-peaked head-gear for the bonnet of everyday life, and thrown over her medieval robes her warm winter cloak; and while Walter was once more explaining that the sitting had been nearly over in any case, she slipped through the door, which Selwyn held open for her, and, with a hurried bow, in acknowledgment of that civility, was gone.

'By Jove!' said the captain gravely, 'this is what you artists call the pursuit of your profession, is it? I don't wonder that portrait-painting is so popular.'

'My dear Selwyn, you don't suppose that that poor girl comes here to have her portrait taken, do you?'

'No; by jingo! I don't,' answered the captain sententially.

'I mean,' continued Walter, with resolute sedateness, 'that though my patrons are not unhappily in the highest position in society, Miss Neale is not one of them. She is a good honest girl, who helps her father by sitting to me as a model for a few shillings an hour.'

'O indeed! she is a model, is she?' returned the captain, still very incredulously. 'A model of what?'

'Oh, of anything, according to the subject, you know.'

Nothing would have been easier, or more convincing, one would have thought, than to have shewn his friend the picture of Philippa—which was already advanced towards completion—in corroboration of this statement; but Walter's first act, on seeing the captain, had been to throw a large piece of linen over the work in question, and rapidly ply his brush on another piece of canvas, which, as it so happened, did not represent the female face divine at all.

'Why, that's the old church at Penaddon, surely,' exclaimed Selwyn, whose attention was easily diverted from one subject to another. 'It's just as well you should have sketched it when you did, for my aunt writes me that these stormy seas have eaten into it worse than ever this winter, so that there is hardly any of it left.'

'Well, never mind the church,' said Walter; 'I want to hear of your own affairs. How are you, old fellow, and—and—Mrs Selwyn?'

He felt that he was blushing, hesitating, and making a mess of his kind inquiries generally, for the idea had struck him, it was just possible that Mrs Sheldon might have written to her nephew about something else beside the encroachments of the sea, might, out of spite and malice, have communicated to him that suspicion about

himself, which had overwhelmed him with such confusion on his departure from Penaddon.

'Oh, I'm well enough, and Lotty too,' said the captain—that is, in health; but that old hunk, her father, will not have a word to say to us, and what is of much more consequence, will not help us with so much as a sixpenny-piece. We are having a very rough time of it, I can tell you.'

'I am very, very sorry to hear it,' said Walter earnestly, his mind reverting to the fate his apprehensions had prefigured for Lotty, exposed to the keen bite of poverty, and shorn of all the comforts that had by use become necessities to her—a beautiful and tender flower fading and failing for want of light and air.

'Yes; it is an ugly story, Litton, and likely to be uglier. It was a risky thing, that marriage of mine, of course, but I never dreamt that things would have gone so deuced hard with me. My sick-leave cannot last for ever, and yet I can't go back to my regiment as a married man. We couldn't live—no, not even in barracks—and that's the short and long of it.'

'But, surely, my dear friend, other people who are captains in the army'—

'Yes, yes; but they don't owe a couple of thousand pounds to start with,' broke in the other impatiently. 'It's no use crying over spilt milk, but the fact is, I have made a precious mess of it. There will be nothing for it but to sell my commission, and then to cut and run, before the Jews can get hold of me. Talk about the miseries of human life; I don't believe there's any one of them to compare with the want of ready-money!'

'How very, very sorry I am,' repeated Walter.

'Yes; I am sure you are; but I wish I could make old Brown sorry. Lilian does her best to move him, she says, and perhaps she does; but no doubt there is a great temptation to her to keep us out of the old man's favour. He has a hundred thousand pounds to leave, if he has a penny; and that is a much better thing than a hundred thousand pounds divided by two, you see; for there is no doubt about it that Lotty was to have been Lily's co-heiress.'

'But surely your sister-in-law would never be actuated by such a base motive? Your wife, I know, has the greatest affection for her, and confidence in her goodness.'

'So she had in mine, for that matter,' observed the captain with a sneer; 'yet, I suppose, I was not much better than other people. I say nothing against Lilian; only it does seem strange that she can't do anything for us with the old fellow. He has some natural affection, I suppose, in spite of his treatment of Lotty, and a woman can always bring a man round, if she will take the trouble.'

'How old is your father-in-law?' inquired Walter.

'Oh, there's no chance of his popping off the hooks, if you mean that. He's no chicken, it is true; but he's one of those City fogies who are as tough as gutta-percha, and take a deal of care of themselves into the bargain. I daresay, if anything was to happen to him—I am sure I wish him in Heaven—Lilian would do something for us, though not one-tenth of what my wife expects of her; but while the grass is growing that is to cover his grave, the steed will starve, my good fellow.'

'I was not alluding to his death,' observed Walter thoughtfully; 'but I have noticed, even in my guardian of late, and much more in other old men, that, with increasing age, the character softens.'

'The brain may do so,' answered the captain contemptuously, 'but not—at least, I'll answer for it in old Brown's case—the disposition. He's as hard as nails. If I could get the commander-in-chief, or some tremendous swell, to intercede for us with him, instead of his own daughter, something might be done, I believe, for he's a snob to the backbone. He would grovel on all-fours, I understand, before a peer of the realm.'

'Then he ought to be at least tolerably civil to the heir-presumptive of a baronetcy.'

'Well, ridiculous as it seems, Litton, that is the one hope I have of circumventing the old fellow. If my first-cousin was to die—and I hear he is in a very ticklish state—I honestly believe that my self-made father-in-law would not shew himself so utterly inexorable to me as Sir Reginald; it is not in his British nature. But there! when do Irishmen ever die, or do anything else you want of them, when they promise it? No, no; my cousin will come round, if it is but to spite me, and I shall starve to death as plain Reginald Selwyn.'

'When you speak of starving, my dear Reginald, you are, of course, merely using a very violent metaphor,' said Walter with anxiety.

'I don't know about a metaphor,' answered the captain; 'but this half-sovereign,' and he took one out of his waistcoat pocket, and held it between his finger and thumb, 'is the very last of all the Mohicans; and when that's gone, I shall not know where to turn for another. Lilian has helped her sister a little out of her private funds; but, as though the old wretch suspected that she might be giving us assistance, her father keeps her very ill supplied.'

Throughout this interview, the captain had been smoking a very excellent cigar, which could not have cost less than eightpence in Regent Street; but this was doubtless either one of the large stock he had in hand when he became a Benedict, or he was smoking it—in which view it might be considered economical—as North American Indians smoke their pipes, in order to allay the pangs of hunger.

'I regret, indeed,' said Walter, blushing exceedingly as his manner was when embarrassed, 'that you should have allowed yourself to come to such straits, without applying to an old friend. I have been taking portraits wholesale, and have quite a balance at my banker's. Come, let me lend you fifty pounds; and he pulled out his cheque-book.

'You are the best fellow out,' said the captain; 'but it is a deuced unpleasant thing to borrow of one's friends. Now, what is Lilian's is Lotty's, or ought to be so; so in that case I feel no compunctions'—

'Then you should feel them still less with me,' interrupted Walter, thrusting the cheque into his hand. 'You would borrow my umbrella, if it rained, I suppose, and I had no occasion to go out; then why not my money when I don't want it? What a fuss is made in the world about borrowing or lending a few pounds! You may ask for a shilling to pay your cab-fare, if you have no change, but gold is a sacred commodity, it appears.'

'It's a commodity that it is precious inconvenient

to be without, old fellow,' said the captain, putting the cheque in his empty purse. 'I won't give you an I.O.U., for that would be waste paper, but I will pay you when I can, upon my honour. You don't suppose, I hope, that I came here to-day, Litton, with any expectation of becoming your debtor?'

'Good heavens, Selwyn, how you talk,' exclaimed Walter; 'of course I suppose nothing of the kind. I took it for granted that you came to see me, as one of your oldest friends; when I come to see you, it will not be concluded, I hope, that I come as a creditor?'

'Don't be savage with me, my good Litton,' returned the captain gravely. 'I daresay, I don't express myself very prettily, but the fact is, I'm soured. The harrow of poverty takes all the skin off the man that is under it, and makes him tender to touch. He thinks everybody is crediting him with the basest motives, and in denying them—*qui s'excuse s'accuse*—he seems to others to acknowledge their existence. I know I'm savage with everybody, and quite as ready to pick a quarrel as a friend's pocket.'

Walter did not reply; he pitied Selwyn, but he pitied Lotty infinitely more. What a life must she be leading, destitute of material comforts, and exposed to the outbreaks of her husband's temper, 'soured,' as he confessed himself to be, by disappointment, and 'savage with everybody!' Was it possible that he could give any assistance to her, beside money? he wondered. If he were to see her, perhaps she could suggest something—and his heart did yearn to see her.

'There's another thing,' continued Selwyn bitterly, 'which poverty—"the test of virtue," "the tonic bitters of life," as fools have called it—does for me—it makes one as proud as Lucifer. Nothing, for example, would seem more natural to you than that I should say: "Well, our home is a very humble one at present; but that will make no difference to you, old friend, so come and see us. I know it would make no difference to you, and yet I don't want to see you there.'

'Is it worse than this?' asked Walter, laughing, and looking round his own apartment, which was of no palatial proportions, and presented such a scene of picturesque disorder—and I am afraid I must add, of dirt—as is only seen in studios.

'Well, no; our London lodgings are not so bare as my barrack-rooms, perhaps, to which you have been always welcome; but they are not such lodgings as are fit for my wife to receive company in.'

'You are the best judge of that,' said Walter quietly. This was an unexpected blow, yet even while he staggered under it, he felt that the punishment was wholesome; his devotion to Mrs Selwyn was perfectly innocent; but for his own happiness, he felt that it was better that that 'yearning' of his to see her should not be gratified. He could not have resisted the temptation to do so, had it been offered, but neither would he fight against his friend's denial.

'You shall come and see Sir Reginald and his lady,' said the captain, laughing, 'and be invited, as their friend, to dine with the great Brown. That old villain has got some particular Madeira, the thought of which makes me still more impatient of my position, since every day by which our reconciliation is postponed (for he drinks it daily) makes an inroad on the bin.—How hard you must have been working lately, Litton!' Here the captain

began to look about him for the first time, his whole attention having been previously occupied in twirling and flattening his moustaches, a sure sign that he had been ill at ease. 'I wonder if I've had any of your pictures from old Levi: he always gives half in pictures, and I've got quite a gallery of them, ancient and modern.—Why, what's this?' and he threw aside the linen cloth that hung over the portrait of Philippa, Edward's queen.

'Oh, that's unfinished,' said Walter hastily, 'and I hate my pictures to be looked at till they are finished.'

'O nonsense, man, you don't mind me,' said the captain, persisting as usual in the indulgence of his own whim. 'Why, this is the best picture of the lot, to my taste. So this is Miss Neale, is it? Well, I confess I should never have recognised her but for the costume. This is a much fairer girl—more like the style of Lotty.'

'Do you think so?' said Walter. His tone was careless, but his face was very pale. 'It is only a sketch, a portion of a larger picture. Perhaps you would like to sit for her husband, King Edward, in chain-armour; I will give you half-a-crown an hour, and your beer.'

'You should have made that offer before you lent me these fifty pounds,' laughed the captain, tapping his pocket. 'Well, good-bye, old fellow, for the present; and if I have any good news, you may be sure you will be the first to hear it.' They parted very cordially, but Walter did not accompany his friend down-stairs. He stood gazing at the uncovered picture, and muttering scornfully to himself: 'I need not have been so apprehensive,' ran his thoughts; 'his indifference makes him blind. "More like the style of Lotty," he said. Perhaps she pleads with him like this, sometimes—upon her knees. Poor Lotty!'

SNAILS AND SNAIL-EATING.

OLD writers on natural history were content to reckon the snail a mere insect; nowadays, being better instructed, we know it to be a species of mollusc, possessing many interesting qualities. Some things, however, in connection with the habits and physiological structure of the animal are as yet not well understood. For example, it is still a matter of dispute whether the snail has eyes; the so-called eye-specks on the horns admitting so few rays of light, that it is questionable whether they serve as eyes at all. But if the snail cannot see, how does it find its food? how does it infallibly pitch upon one's peaches and plums, the moment they attain the particular stage of maturity most grateful to its palate? That is another mystery; but there is no mystery about the way it works such havoc in fruit-gardens: it is furnished with a tongue bearing upwards of twenty thousand teeth, which it can use after the manner of a saw or of a rasp, as seems best, and, to make matters worse, its appetite is as voracious as the means of indulging it are perfect.

The snail's lease of life should be a long one, if that may be measured by its powers of endurance. A lady collected a number of prettily marked ones, and thought to kill them by a couple of boiling-water baths. The next morning she found the obstinate creatures crawling about the summer-house in which she had left them, some of the more hungry ones feeding upon the paste intended for

cementing them together. The tender-hearted shell artist cried at the sight, and determined to have nothing more to do with snail-boiling. In 1774, the members of the Royal Society could not be brought to believe an Irish collector, who averred that certain white snails that had been confined in his cabinet for at least fifteen years, came out of their shells upon his son putting them in warm water; but the possibility of the thing was proved in 1850, when, after four years' somnolence in the British Museum, an Egyptian desert snail woke up none the worse for its long rest and abstinence. It fed heartily upon lettuce-leaves, and lived for two years longer. Spallanzani asserted he had often beheaded snails without killing them, and that in a few months they were as lively as ever, having grown new heads in retirement; but we fancy the abbé must have played the headsman imperfectly, and only taken a slice off, instead of the whole head.

Snail-eating has been in vogue in Italy for many centuries. In Pliny's time, Barbary snails stood first in repute, those of Sicily ranking next; and it was the custom to fatten the creatures for the table by dieting them upon meal and new wine, with such success, if we dare believe Varro, that some of their shells would hold ten quarts of liquor, so that they must have rivalled the Brobdignagian snail over whose shell poor Gulliver broke his shin. In modern Rome, fresh-gathered snails are hawked by women from door to door, for the benefit of good housewives, who boil them in their shells, stew them, or fry them in oil. An Englishman strolling about Palermo, came upon some people gathered round a number of baskets filled with what, at first sight, he took to be white pebbles. Upon nearer acquaintance, the pebbles proved to be snails, waiting to be thrown into a large iron pot standing over a fire made between four stones, and boiled with herbs and tomatoes, for retailing to the expectant crowd. Dining afterwards with a Sicilian gentleman, he was invited to partake of some snails treated in this way, and, for politeness' sake, forced himself to swallow a couple of them, although he found it impossible to feign the delight with which his host and his daughter sucked the molluscs out of their shells. A century ago, some four millions of snails were annually exported from Ulm in 'cags' of ten thousand, fetching from twenty-five to forty florins a cag. We do not know if Ulm still carries on the trade, but any one desiring a lesson in snail-culture, may learn all about it in the Tyrol. There youngsters of both sexes are employed during the summer months collecting snails as stock for the snail-gardens—small plots of land, cleared of trees, and covered with heaps of moss and pine-twigs, and separated from each other by moats, having gratings at their outlets, to prevent any truants that may get into the water from being carried beyond bounds. The prisoners are supplied daily with fresh grass and cabbage-leaves, until their appetites fail, and they retire into the moss-heaps for their winter's sleep, the last one they will enjoy; for when spring comes, they are routed out of their beds, packed in straw-lined boxes, and sent on to market. In a favourable season, one of these gardens will turn out forty thousand snails. The consumption of them in the South Tyrol must be great. The Italians and Tyrolese are not the only people who appreciate the merits of these

clean-feeding molluscs. In Paris, Burgundian snails are worth a halfpenny apiece, and five hundred pounds worth of snails are disposed of in the markets in the course of a year. Indeed, the establishment of a special market for the sale of snails is talked about, and the authorities are considering the expediency of making snails pay the octroi duty—a very strong evidence that they have become a recognised article of food.

The snail generally eaten in Italy is the large brown one; and certain big brown striped snails to be found in Surrey are said to be descended from some imported from Italy by one of the Arundels, either to please his foreign wife's palate, or to save her from consumption. We do not suppose snails were ever served at ordinary English dinner-tables, although Robert May—whose cookery-book, published in 1660, was declared to deserve the praises of famous Cleveland or renowned Ben—gives full directions for cooking them. They were to be stewed in claret, vinegar, and spice, with some minced hard-boiled eggs, and served on bread, with slices of lemon; fried in butter with onions or eels; or—after being shelled, salted, and scoured—boiled with rosemary, parsley, thyme, and salad oil, put back in the shells, set over the fire, and served hot from the gridiron. According to this accomplished cook, snails were only in season in January, February, and March; so thought the country lass who told a gentleman who caught her catching snails: 'We hooks them out of the wall in winter-time, not in the summer; and we roasts them, and when they've done spitting, they be adone, and I loves them dearly!' Gipsies, too, love them dearly, esteeming a dish of snails something delicious. Some few years back, the newspapers gave currency to a story of a poor woman who had fed herself and family through the winter upon snails she had salted down in a barrel. A curious discussion arose upon this. Some insisted the thing could not be done without destroying the shells. Fearing that, if this view prevailed, people might be deterred from storing such wholesome and palatable food, a correspondent of *Notes and Queries* sent the editor a salted snail, which had lost little of its bulk, and less of its weight, in the process, for him to taste and criticise.

We are told that the Newcastle glassmakers hold an annual snail-feast; that snails are publicly sold in Gloucestershire markets, and that, properly boiled in spring-water, and seasoned with pepper and salt, they make a very nice dish. Nevertheless, the day is far distant when English folk will take kindly to them; they may, like Philemon Holland, own the possibility of snails being very wholesome, 'but toothsome, certainly not.'

Dr Bulleyn, a famous physician of Elizabeth's day, says snails broken from the shells and sodden in white wine with oil and sugar, are very wholesome, because they are hot and moist, for the straightness of the lungs and cold cough; so those who believe snail-soup as good as cod-liver oil have professional warrant for their faith, though most consumptive patients might declare the remedy to be worse than the disease, if it is necessary, as Mrs Delaney says, to take a spoonful of snail-soup with everything imbibed. In the winter and spring resorts for invalids in the south of England, snails are carefully collected for the purpose of making a kind of mucilaginous soup for those who are affected with certain complaints.

We are told that nothing is more delicate and nourishing.

When snails go wandering without their shells, it is generally supposed to be a sign of coming wet weather. An American observer says one species of snail, known in Cincinnati, never takes its walks abroad except rain is at hand; then it may be found ascending the trees, and getting upon the leaves. Others do this sort of climbing two days before a downfall—settling upon the upper side of the leaves if the downpour is destined to be soon over, but taking to the under side if it will be heavy and long-lasting. One species turns yellow before rain, and blue when it is over. The 'solitary snail' retires to crevices in the rocks, and fastens up his domicile a few days before wet sets in; while the 'forest snail,' which has been timed to travel a mile in forty-four hours, as soon as he feels foul weather is approaching, makes the best of his way to some more exposed situation, that he may have the benefit of it—so that, even among snails, tastes differ.

A VISIT TO ARCACHON.

A SUMMER visit to this little known French watering-place on the Bay of Biscay, situated to the south-west of Bordeaux, is less interesting than a visit made in the last days of autumn or in winter; for then the little town, which aspires to become, at no distant time, a flourishing city, assumes a lodging-house and sea-bathing aspect; the natural industries of the neighbourhood are interfered with; and the primitive picturesqueness of the bay, the sands, the forest, and the clusters of semi-Swiss chalets, partly disappears. The proper time for a sojourn at Arcachon is when the October and November gales are heard roaring beyond the basin, crying, as if from the heart of black pine-forests fifty miles square, and when, on favourable nights, swarms of boats, illuminated by red fires at the stern, put out from the shore in search of fish, which are attracted by the light, and are harpooned by steady hands.

At Arcachon, the entire locality, as at Biarritz and Trouville, is comparatively new. Forty years ago, there existed only a church, a few huts, and a sort of infant pump-room. Only by boat, or on horseback, or on foot, could it be approached. Now, a railway invites the stranger. There is a long, straggling street, with rows of little shops resembling booths at a fair; a range of private dwellings with two fronts—one opening on the highway, and the other facing the sea; a street impossible to widen, since it is inclosed between the sand-hills and the bay; a sweep of galleried structures, often adorned by brilliant gardens, whence the sojourner may emerge, either to swim in the waters—quiet here—that pour in from the Atlantic; or plunge into the dark avenues of the forest, wherein the resinous emanations are declared to be of incomparable value to thin-blooded and weak-chested people. Arcachon, therefore, is a kind of French Bournemouth, with the superior advantage of a genial southern climate; its dry, sandy soil, and its far extending groves of pine trees, being deemed of much value in a sanitary point of view. From my own experience, the resinous perfumes of the Arcachon pines are rather overpowering, and a little trying to the head. But, on these accounts, Arcachon—the word

having a medical significance in itself—has been elected queen of the bay, notwithstanding that, along the same curve of coast, it had nine competitors, whose barks dot the waves with white spots by day, and kindle them with crimson flames by night.

Nothing that I saw in the interior of the sterile wastes lying inland, over which the stilt-walkers stride like phantoms, produces an effect more striking than the autumnal torch-light fishery. The quaint craft steal quietly out, with noiseless oars; no one speaks; behind the helm of each is an iron grating, upon which burns, with a blood-coloured blaze, a flambeau of pine-wood; close to this, a man, armed with a long and keen-pointed trident, keeps his eyes fixed upon the transparent ripples; the drowsy fish, fascinated, rise lazily to the surface, and are speared with marvellous dexterity. It was not an easy matter to get admitted to take part in one of these night excursions; but, upon condition of absolute silence, I was privileged; and nothing could have been more curious than to watch the harpooner as, from one moment to another, he flung his prey over his shoulders into the bottom of the boat. A still more fantastic sight, however—which I did not witness—is said to be exhibited on a perfectly dark night, when the surface of the sea is phosphorescent, and each mute stroke of the oar scatters around a cloud of sparkling drops. The fishermen stopped one evening at the Island of Birds, about half-an-hour's distance from the hotel, a spot embosomed in the water, of which it is declared that neither tree, nor shrub, nor flower will flourish upon it. Formerly, a few cows and sheep browsed upon its desolate hill, guarded by a solitary shepherd, inhabiting a rude hut, often threatened with destruction by the waves. You may shoot rabbits here, or ducks, or pick up oysters; but it is a dreary desert, on a miniature scale, and only suggests a picture to the eye when the fire-bearing boats are clustered about it, beneath the sky of a moonless midnight.

The people of this place, other than the fishermen and the resin-collectors, have grown ambitious within the last few years. Not merely do they aspire to create a luxurious little city on the shores of their basin, but they contemplate reclaiming the sandy territories behind, and converting the sweep of sea in front of them into a first-class naval refuge. Having seen all the simplicities of their life, it occurs to me that the fruition of such wishes might spoil the place altogether. No one, with a heart for the picturesque or the pastoral, could desire that Arcachon—the lonely and lovely bay of the Atlantic—should be converted into a Hastings, or a Scarborough, or a Rothesay, charming as those resorts unquestionably are; for, leaving the little town, and turning into the nearer woods, you have a perspective before you, which is that, not of a city, or a village, or anything else in Europe, the timber-built hamlets of the Black Forest not excepted. Here is a miniature villa, with foundations, walls, floors, roofs, partitions, balconies, staircases, and dovecots of pine, varnished bright, and impenetrable to rain, with resin. The place is almost desolate during nine months of the year, though some people are known who cling to these solitudes from one midsummer to another, preferring their retreats, in the neighbourhood of her vintages, to the fierce and talkative society of

Bordeaux. These hermitages, dedicated to the fishermen of the bay, are characteristic enough. At least, I visited one, where I heard that peculiar mysteries were celebrated on behalf of the fisher population. It was a structure, of poverty-stricken appearance, oblong in shape, built half of wood and half of iron-coloured clay, roofed with unbaked tiles, mossed over by damp and time, and miserable in appearance altogether. What a contrast between the picture and its frame! That hutch, in the depth of the forest, and the encircling majesty of pines, with—as it almost startles a stranger to see—the strawberry in flower and fruitage at the same time, an evergreen in that region, having leaves which the peasants compare with the wings of butterflies! Yet the streams, not far off, were glazed with ice, and the frost sparkled beautifully, like, as the Germans have it, 'its daughter, the snow,' upon the hollies. The interior, although hospitable in its way, as poverty often is, was more forbidding and hopeless than the exterior. I entered through a low-browed doorway, opening, as the doorways of these cabins invariably do, towards the south, and found an abode divided by a rickety partition into two chambers. The first was a kitchen; the second, a bedroom. The former contained an immense fire-place, surmounted by a mantel-piece of wood, supported by two fragments of stone, quarried from the rocks of the Landes; and this, be it noted, is excavated always in the western wall. The contents of the poor residence were characteristic—the resin-collector's pannikin and hatchet; a few dried skins; and some dishes, plates, frying-pans, stew-pans, and forks, all manufactured out of wood. Instead of chairs, there were stools, or planks upheld on tressels. In this snug apartment, there was plenty, if not fastidiousness, of food. For sleeping accommodation, I fear I was indebted to the self-sacrifice of the inmates. They gave up the second room, in consideration of a gratuity ridiculously small. In it stood two beds, resembling those Italian walnut or oaken chests which hold the bride's treasure and trousseau. No curtains, of course; a fresh, rye-straw mattress; a gray cotton coverlet, coarse and heavy; many draughts; a bare floor; and neither chair nor table. The lodging did not inspire you as does a pleasant second-floor in a Rhenish inn.

The whole affair shewed a curiously primitive state of things, but I liked it better for its very simplicity. Sleep was undisturbed, and, I am assured, made all the more tranquil by the wafted, thick, and heavy odour of the pines. But no laziness is permitted in this poor yet active region. Slumber after dawn is impossible. The people—men, women, boys, and girls, are up; the gallipots are cleaned out, ready for the day's work in the forest; the nets and lines are repaired; a few fellows, equipped for the small chances of a hunt in the woods, strap on their bags, and shoulder their guns, and, almost literally, nobody is left at home. For a burglar or a thief, in this country, you might as well explore North Wales. But for a tinge of fashionable assumption, I am not quite certain that Arcachon is innocent. There was a *seigneur*, renting one of the *pavilions*, as they are called, in the forest, who had actually brought fifty dogs, with a gay company of people, from his own château, somewhere in Gascony. To the astonishment of the poor pine-hewers, there

issued forth from the Swiss-eaved *châlet* a train of ladies, mounted; and, indeed, the spectacle brought back a reminiscence from the days of Louis X. at Chantilly. I confess to not feeling much sympathy with the hunters, or, rather, to more sympathy with the naturalists of the sub-Pyrenean forests; yet the ring of the horn, the cry of the hounds, the dash of the deer through the paths among the thickets, are awakening; and the final gathering of the group, in an old glade of the old forest of Arcachon, is a vision etched upon the memory, not soon to be obliterated. I thought, when I first dwelt for a few days in Arcachon, that it was destined to a monotonous existence as a mere fishing-village, and an occasional resort of the *malades* from Bordeaux and the neighbouring cities of the south. But I found it a cheerful place of recreation, notwithstanding that it pretends to no theatre or concert-room; that it remains primitive in spite of improvement, and that it may be regarded as a happy asylum for those who have been wearied by the pretensions of the German spas. The breadth of the bay is in itself a curative power. I fancy that this splendid bay, combined with the new and pretty vanities of Arcachon, might suffice to render worn-out fashionables young again. I cordially recommend a visit to the spot, on the ground of its health-giving qualities. Let there be pilgrims to Arcachon, who may tell whether the unprofessional physician of experience be right or wrong.

WAITING.

WAITING! For what? Shall I ever know?

Or shall the new years creep drowsily by

Till my death-day comes; shall I never know why

I was born, and must live out my life of woe?

Is the whole of my lifetime merely a pause

'Twixt my birth that was, and my death to be?

Must I always follow, and never be free?

Am I only effect? Can I never be cause?

Or am I but a link of the weariful chain

Of life, and the sequence of things gone by?

I am forced to live, for I cannot die,

But my life is empty and all in vain.

Yet sometimes I hear my spirit, elate

At the thought of the glorious deeds to be done,

Cry: 'Strike! 'Tis the time!' But, in answer,
one—

Shall I ever know who?—whispers: 'Silence! Wait!'

It cannot be Hope, for her voice is sweet;

It is not Despair, for I know her well:

'Tis like the ceaseless drone of a knell,

And wearies the heart with monotonous beat.

Shall another voice ever whisper to me:

'Awake! 'Tis the hour! Go forward and fight!

Thy probation is ended, and impotent night

Has burst into day! So shall set me free?

I know not, I know not; this only I dread,

That, ere that voice shall proclaim that hour,

Not only the will may be lost, but the power,

And I may be cold with the nameless dead.

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